

# NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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***For Immediate Release***

**MAY 11, 2004**

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on May 3, 2004, **PRENTICE R. WASHINGTON**, a/k/a "P," age 22, of Chicago, Illinois, was sentenced in United States District Court in Benton, Illinois. WASHINGTON, who had previously pled guilty to a one-count indictment charging him with conspiracy to distribute 5 grams or more of crack cocaine, was sentenced to 188 months' imprisonment, 5 years supervised release, and was fined \$350.

The investigation established that from at least April 2001, through January, 2002, WASHINGTON and co-defendants JAHNERIA SINGLETARY and BLAIR TIBBS and others were involved in the distribution of crack cocaine in Carbondale and Murphysboro, Illinois. The crack cocaine was transported from Chicago and was distributed in Carbondale and Murphysboro. The investigation further established that, on September 8, 2001, SINGLETARY, Tyree Cunningham and others planned to break into WASHINGTON's apartment to steal his crack cocaine and drug proceeds. When Tyree Cunningham, who was armed with a shotgun, forced his way into WASHINGTON's apartment, WASHINGTON shot and killed Tyree Cunningham. WASHINGTON and his associates then disposed of Tyree Cunningham's body in rural Jackson County.

At sentencing, the district court found that WASHINGTON was involved with more than 1.5 kilograms of crack cocaine. WASHINGTON's sentence was increased based on his possession of a firearm and his leadership position in the crack cocaine conspiracy. Co-defendants SINGLETARY and TIBBS have previously been sentenced to 204 months' imprisonment and 168 months' imprisonment, respectively, for their roles in the crack cocaine conspiracy.

The investigation was conducted by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Carbondale Police Department and Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, pursuant to their participation in the Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses in the system that will get them the most time. The Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative is a joint and cooperative effort of the United States Attorney's Office, Jackson County States Attorney's Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, and Murphysboro Police Department.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.